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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION ON STATE OF THE UNION SPEECH,
JANUARY 23, 2004

1. Editorial in Tegucigalpa-based liberal daily "La Tribuna" on 1/23 entitled "State of the Union Message". "The message of President Bush fell short, not only did it not address Latin American issues, but it was weak on international issues as a whole. For instance, Bush didn't talk about some other key subjects, such as the Israel and Palestine conflict, and the risks in Afghanistan and North Korea."

"Bush didn't talk about Latin American issues; he ignored them. He tried to focus on the domestic issues that, according to his own view, are more appealing to the American voters. Certainly, all those conflictive and argumentative issues aren't good material for a State of the Union speech, particularly before an electoral campaign."

"The Hondurans that had a chance to listen to this speech noted that Bush mentioned only one Central American country, when he cited the members of the coalition in Iraq, although we're certain Honduras is one of the other fifteen countries he failed to mention Honduras."

Palmer